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5 March 1959

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63

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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25X1

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

810
USSR-UK: Foreign Secretary Lloyd has told Ambassador Thompson that he and Macmillan have become convinced that Khrushchev is running the show and there is little point in talking to anyone else. Even Mikoyan was careful to take his cues from Khrushchev. The British take credit for inducing the Soviet leaders to "agree" to a foreign ministers' meeting under certain conditions. Lloyd implied that although the Soviet agenda proposals were unsatisfactory the West might consider accepting them. The British were impressed by the "extraordinary sensitivity" of the Soviet leaders which they found combined with "a lack of understanding of the sensibilities of others."

25X1

25X1

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

25X1

710
Watch Committee conclusion--Middle East: Situations susceptible of direct exploitation by Sino-Soviet hostile action which would jeopardize US interests exist in the Middle East, particularly in Iran and Iraq. The situations in the area remain precarious, but a deliberate initiation of large-scale hostilities is unlikely in the immediate future.

Iran: Current tensions between Iran and the USSR can be expected to continue and, with the signing of the Iranian-US bilateral, to increase to a point short of direct military action.

Jordan: The scheduled absence from Jordan of King Hussein beginning on 8 March and Prime Minister Rifai beginning on 17 March

5 Mar 59

DAILY BRIEF

ii

25X1

25X1

provides opportunity for political competition among members of the government remaining in Amman and for coups by opposition elements.

Sudan: The resignation of the Supreme Council in the Sudan underscores the instability of the government and its exploitability by outside elements.

25X1

25X1

III. THE WEST

France-NATO: High French officials attribute De Gaulle's decision to withdraw the Mediterranean Fleet from NATO to his dissatisfaction with the response to France's proposals for Western tripartite global policy coordination. Paris holds that genuine coordination would involve US backing for France's North African policy and a voice for France in any US or British decision to use nuclear weapons. Although the French now indicate they would reconsider withdrawal of the fleet if their proposals for tripartite coordination are treated more favorably, De Gaulle will still probably insist on changes within NATO to give France a status he considers comparable to that of the United States and Britain.

25X1

25X1

Bolivia: The 4 March demonstrations in La Paz passed without further anti-American rioting, but tension continues high in some provincial cities. Some public reaction against violence seems to have set in, and President Siles' speech of 3 March promising a plan for supporting the nation by its own resources may be serving to restore his moderate leadership.

25X1

25X1

5 Mar 59

DAILY BRIEF

iii

25X1

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

III. THE WEST

France Ties Withdrawal of Fleet From NATO to De Gaulle's Tripartite Policy Proposals

25X1

[French Ambassador Alphand has informed the State Department that he believed Paris would "indefinitely" postpone notifying NATO of intent to withdraw the Mediterranean Fleet if its proposals for tripartite Western global policy coordination were received more favorably. He and other high French officials have described De Gaulle as "profoundly shocked" by the US abstention on the Algerian resolution in the UN last December, and have stressed this as the root of the French decision.]

[The French representative to NATO held out no hope that De Gaulle would change his decision on the fleet. He said the whole question went back to the lack of progress in the tripartite discussions in Washington on coordination of policy. He said the greatest difficulty lay in "who held the keys" to the use of nuclear weapons.]

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